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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION: HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Report of the Second Committee (Part VIII)*

Rapporteur: Mr. Basheer F. ZOUBI (Jordan)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 95, sub-items (f), (g), (h), (i), (j) and (k) (see A/50/617, para. 3). Action on sub-item (g) was taken at the 38th and 42nd meetings, on 22 November and 8 December 1995. An account of the Committee's consideration of the item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/50/SR.38 and 42).

II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS A/C.2/50/L.34 AND L.70

2. At the 38th meeting, on 22 November, the representative of the Philippines, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Developing human resources for development" (A/C.2/50/L.34), which read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Reaffirming its resolutions 48/205 of 21 December 1990, 45/191 of 21 December 1990, 46/143 of 17 December 1991, S-18/3 of 1 May 1990 and 45/199 of 21 December 1990,

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* The report of the Committee on this agenda item will be issued in several parts, under the symbol A/50/617 and addenda.

"Reaffirming that the human being is central to all activities related to development and that human resources development strategies are crucial to the achievement of sustainable development goals,

"Recognizing that human resources development should contribute to total human development which enlarges the choices available to people in developing their lives and fulfilling their aspirations and that there is a need to integrate human resources development into comprehensive strategies for human development, taking into account the needs of all people, in particular the needs of women,

"Stressing that there is need for a supportive and favourable international economic environment which will enhance human development in developing countries and promote economic growth and development,

"Recognizing that structural adjustment and stabilization programmes are intended to promote economic growth and development but may have adverse effects on human resources development and therefore emphasizing the need to ensure that, in the formulation and implementation of such programmes, action is taken to mitigate their negative effects,

"Emphasizing the need for the provision of adequate resources to enhance the capacity of developing countries to promote human resources development policies and programmes,

"Recognizing the vital role that South-South and North-South cooperation play in supporting national efforts in human resources development,

"Emphasizing the need for coordination and integration among the organs and organizations of the United Nations system in assisting developing countries to foster the development of their human resources, especially that of the most vulnerable, and for the United Nations to continue to give priority to human resources development in developing countries,

"Recognizing the importance accorded in the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development to the human component of development, 1/

"Recognizing also the importance of the Programme of Action adopted at the recently concluded Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing from 4 to 15 September 1995,

"1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on developing human resources for development; 2/

1/ See A/CONF.166/9, chap. I.

2/ A/50/330 and Corr.1.

"2. Emphasizes that in developing human resources, an overall, well conceived and integrated approach should be adopted which takes into account the needs of all people, in particular the needs of women, and other vital areas such as population education, nutrition, water, sanitation, housing, communications, education and training, and science and technology, and also the need to create more opportunity for employment in an environment which enhances human capacities for development;

"3. Calls upon the international community, in particular the developed countries, to support national efforts to develop human resources for development by an increased flow of resources for those activities and by fostering a conducive international economic environment;

"4. Calls upon the relevant organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to ensure the coordination of activities in support of national and regional action in the area of human resources development;

"5. Calls for the inclusion of social safety nets to mitigate the adverse impact of structural adjustment which has a tendency to reduce budgetary allocations for education, health and other social infrastructures which have a direct impact on human resources development;

"6. Acknowledges the action taken thus far by the United Nations system in operational activities in the area of human resources development and urges further action in accordance with resolutions of the General Assembly on human resources for development;

"7. Notices with concern the worrisome trend of a decrease in overall development assistance which seriously affects the level of resources for human resources development and emphasizes that financial commitment to human resources development is of critical importance in contributing to the enhancement of the concept of people-centred development;

"8. Further emphasizes that women are an integral part of the human resources development process and should be integrated into and participate fully in the formulation and implementation of national policies to promote human resources development;

"9. Calls for follow-up action to be taken in respect of the Copenhagen Declaration in order to ensure the strengthening of human resources development as addressed in the Declaration and Programme of Action; 2/

"10. Requests the Secretary-General to take into account the important link between human resources and human settlements, to be addressed at the upcoming United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, to be held in Istanbul from 3 to 14 June 1996;

"11. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to monitor the activities of the United Nations system in human resources development and to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, including further action

taken by the United Nations system with regard to human resources development and in the enhancement of inter-agency coordination;

"12. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-second session an item entitled 'Human resources development'."

3. At the 42nd meeting, on 8 December, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Conor Murphy (Ireland), introduced a draft resolution entitled "Developing human resources for development" (A/C.2/50/L.70), which he submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/50/L.34.

4. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/50/L.70 without a vote (see para. 6).

5. In view of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/50/L.70, draft resolution A/C.2/50/L.34 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE

6. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Developing human resources for development

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolutions 48/205 of 21 December 1993, 46/143 of 17 December 1991 and 45/191 of 21 December 1990, as well as its resolutions S-18/3 of 1 May 1990 and 45/199 of 21 December 1990,

Reaffirming that people are central to all activities related to development and that human resources development is an essential means of achieving sustainable development goals,

Recognizing that human resources development should contribute to total human development, which enlarges the choices available to people in developing their lives and fulfilling their aspirations, and that there is a need to integrate human resources development into comprehensive strategies for human development that mainstreams a gender perspective, taking into account the needs of all people, in particular the needs of women,

Stressing that there is need for a supportive and favourable international economic environment that will enhance human development in developing countries and promote economic growth and development,

Recognizing that, while economic reforms and structural adjustment programmes are intended to promote economic growth and development, elements of such programmes may have a possibly adverse impact on human resources development, and also that there is a need to take action, in the formulation and implementation of these programmes, to mitigate any negative effects,

Stressing the need for adequate resources to enhance the capacity of Governments of developing countries to promote human resources development in pursuit of their national programmes, plans and strategies for development,

Stressing also that Governments of developing countries have the primary responsibility for defining and implementing appropriate policies for human resources development,

Recognizing the vital role that South-South and North-South cooperation plays in supporting national efforts in human resources development, bilaterally as well as multilaterally,

Emphasizing the need for coordination and integration among the organs and organizations of the United Nations system in assisting developing countries to foster the development of their human resources, especially that of the most vulnerable, and for the United Nations to continue to give priority to human resources development in developing countries,

Recognizing the importance accorded in the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development to the human component of development, 3/

Recognizing also the importance of the Platform for Action adopted at the recently concluded Fourth World Conference on Women, 4/ held in Beijing from 4 to 15 September 1995,

1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General on developing human resources for development; 5/

2. Emphasizes that, in the development of human resources, an overall, well-conceived and integrated approach that mainstreams a gender perspective and takes into account the needs of all people should be adopted, incorporating such vital areas as population, health, nutrition, water, sanitation, housing, communications, education and training, and science and technology, as well as taking into account the need to create more opportunities for employment in an environment that guarantees opportunities for political freedom, popular participation, respect for human rights, justice and equity, all of which are essential for enhancing human capacity to meet the challenge of development;

3. Encourages all countries to accord priority, in particular in national budgets, to human resources development in the context of the adoption of economic and social policies;

4. Emphasizes the need to ensure the full participation of women in the formulation and implementation of national policies to promote human resources development;

3/ See A/CONF.166/9, chap. I, resolution 1.

4/ See A/CONF.177/20, chap. I, resolution 1.

5/ A/50/330 and Corr.1.

5. Calls upon the international community to support national efforts to develop human resources for development by increasing the priority of resources for those activities;

6. Calls upon the relevant organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to ensure the coordination of activities in support of national and regional action in the area of human resources development;

7. Emphasizes that structural adjustment programmes should include social development goals, in particular the eradication of poverty, the promotion of full and productive employment, and the enhancement of social integration;

8. Also emphasizes that Governments and relevant institutions should ensure, where appropriate, an adequate social safety net under structural adjustment programmes and should develop policies to reduce the negative effects of these programmes and to improve their positive impact, bearing in mind that social safety nets associated with economic restructuring are short-term by nature and should be considered as complementary strategies;

9. Acknowledges the action taken thus far by the United Nations system in operational activities in the area of human resources development, and urges further action in accordance with resolutions of the General Assembly on human resources for development;

10. Notes with serious concern the worrisome trend of a decrease in overall development assistance, which affects the level of resources for human resources development, and emphasizes that financial commitment to human resources development is of critical importance in contributing to the enhancement of the concept of people-centred sustainable development;

11. Calls for follow-up action to be taken as recommended in the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development and in the Beijing Platform for Action, in order to ensure the strengthening of human resources development;

12. Requests the Secretary-General to take into account the outcome of the upcoming United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) in the context of human resources development;

13. Also requests the Secretary-General to continue to monitor the activities of the United Nations system in human resources development and to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, including further action taken by the United Nations system with regard to human resources development and the enhancement of inter-agency coordination;

14. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-second session a sub-item entitled "Human resources development" under the item entitled "Sustainable development and international economic cooperation".